CHAPTER SEVEN
ROLE OF GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs) IN POVERTY REDUCTION OF RURAL PEOPLE IN THE STUDY AREA

7.1 Introduction

Ethiopian government plays major role in poverty reduction both in urban and rural areas. The majority of Ethiopian people live in rural places. Poverty manifests itself in many ways among rural women, migrants and refugee women, elderly women and children, and indigenous women (IFAD 2010: 17). Rural FHHs are the most vulnerable section of the society. Thus, the government of Ethiopia has been constantly pursuing development efforts addressing mainly rural poverty. Its effort is backed by national as well as international non-governmental organizations through material, financial, technological, food assistances.

Ethiopia prepared its Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP) in November 2000. The preparation of the full poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) named as Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP) was finalized in August 2002. The program has been the main guiding document until now and it will be also the main guiding document until the fiscal year 2004/05. The core objective of the strategy paper, as stated in the document, is to reduce poverty and ensure food security through rapid economic growth, which is expected to be achieved via free market economic system. The development of the agricultural sector is the key to achieve this objective. Moreover, the agricultural sector is chosen as the leading sector in the country’s endeavor to achieve industrialization.
The Ethiopian SDPRP is built on four pillars, namely (a) Agricultural Development-Led Industrialization (ADLI) and food security, (b) Justice System and Civil Service Reform, (c) Decentralization and Empowerment, and (d) Capacity Building in Public and Private sectors. Of the four building blocks, ADLI was designed to develop the agricultural sector, reduce poverty, ensure food security, and ultimately bring industrialization. The other three blocks were designed to enhance the effectiveness of ADLI in reducing poverty and ensuring food security.

The Ethiopian PRSP called SDPRP has identified key pro-poor sectors (agriculture, health, education, water, and road) among which agriculture is the most important element for reducing poverty of the masses of people living in rural areas. The health, education, water and the road sector plans were designed mainly to facilitate rural development.

Libo kemkem Woreda is identified as one of the food insecure areas where a lot of poor people found. About 22 kebeles among 29 kebeles are food insecure. Even though majority of Ethiopian people particularly people of this Woreda are poor by any standard, FHHs are relatively the most vulnerable people due to low level of assets compared to MHHs. Hence, the administrative organ of the region has been tried to adopt all the formulated and designed policies of the government in coalition with the people and other non-governmental organizations in order to alleviate poverty.

7.2 Government Actions

Besides the establishment and improvement of major sectors of social services such as education, health, water, transport, electricity, the government with the backing of a range of international donors launched the Coalition for Food Security
and the Food Security Program (FSP) to break this cycle of annual relief and to work toward achieving the Poverty and Hunger MDG. The program aims to reduce the vulnerability and to attain food security. The FSP has three primary components: Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP)\textsuperscript{16}, household extension packages, and resettlement.

\textbf{7.2.1 Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP)}

The PSNP in conjunction with the other components of the Food Security Program is one of the most ambitious and comprehensive social protection programs of its kind in the developing world. Launched in February 2005, the PSNP aims to smooth consumption in chronically food insecure households by providing efficient and predictable transfers of cash and/or food during lean months.

According to Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development (2006), Amhara National Regional State comprised of 52 chronically food insecure Woredas. The beneficiaries of the Program are the food insecure population living in these chronically food insecure Woredas. This figure is currently estimated to be about 8 million people. The beneficiaries of the program are resource-poor and vulnerable to shocks, and often fail to produce enough food even at times of normal rains in the country. The Productive Safety Net Program is being implemented only in rural areas.

Among the 52 chronically food insecure Woredas of Amhara region, Libo Kemkem Woreda is one of them due to satisfying the criteria set by the federal government. These are: a) it should be part of Amhara Region and b) the Woreda has

\textsuperscript{16} The PSNP is implemented by the Government of Ethiopia with support from the following development partners: Canadian International Development Agency, UK Department for International Development, Irish Aid, European Commission, Royal Netherlands Embassy, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, United States Agency for International Development, World Food Program and World Bank.
been a recipient of food aid for a significant period, generally for at least each of the last years. From the total beneficiaries of 2,519,529 households’ identified, about 42,686 households were found in this Woreda. Officer of food security in Libo Kemkem Woreda told the researcher that the food insecure kebeles are characterized by the uneven topography, high population density, land erosion, environmental degradation, erratic rainfall, low productivity, climate hazards and poor infrastructures.

PSNP aims to reduce household vulnerability, protects household assets and improves household resilience. At the same time it aims to provide labor to create community assets (e.g. check dams and roads). In conjunction with other programs such as credit packages and agricultural extension, the PSNP seeks to address both the immediate and underlying causes of food insecurity. Over the course of the PSNP, the program aims to ‘graduate’ participants from food insecurity into sustainable food security.

The PSNP provides assistance to two kinds of chronically food insecure households: those in which able-bodied members are able to contribute to labor-intensive public works activities (public works beneficiaries) and those that are labor poor, elderly or otherwise incapacitated (direct support beneficiaries). A lot of effort is made to include women particularly FHHs in the program. Women are encouraged to be benefited by the program through provision of direct support for elder, disabled, pregnant and for those who are labor poor and lack of supporters.

The program provides a mix of food and cash transfers to beneficiaries in an effort to sustain and stimulate local markets and provide smallholders with greater flexibility over consumption decisions. The maximum number of days a household can work per month is based on the size of the household. Eligible household members can together work up to 5 person days per month for each member of the
household. This depends on the availability of working bodies at the household level. If a household has two adults, they ought to work for ten days for one month.

Households are paid according to the number of days of labor they actually contribute. However, if the number of household members exceeds the available household labor supply, all household members will be covered. There is a maximum number of days per month a household with one able bodied person needs to work to meet their household entitlement i.e., 20 days. Currently, beneficiaries obtain fourteen birr per a day for their labor.

Although the PSNP is being implemented reasonably well and is making a difference to the lives and livelihoods of chronically poor households, a range of factors continue to hamper its implementation and impact. These include:

7.2.1.1 Problem of identification of target groups

During the outset of the program, registration of target groups was carried out by kebele officials in cooperation with development agents. Registrations did not perform properly. This is, as some informants explained, due to misuse of power by kebele officials that they registered their relatives and neighbors. As a result, most of the participants were not targets groups of PSNP. Actually, officials owe low level of capacity to implement the PSNP. Sharp, Brown and Amdisa (2006: 49) found little evidence of systematic corruption or misuse of PSNP resources by administrators in the study Woreda like nepotism and bribery. However, nepotism and bribery brought big consequences through exclusion of target groups, female-headed households at kebele level.
7.2.1.2 Lack of updating the list of beneficiary households

Identification of target groups’ problem is aggravated by lack of updates of participants. In principle, participants’ registration should be updated twice in every year. But, according to informants in the study area and the officer of food security at Woreda level, no revision of beneficiaries’ participants carried out until now. Hence, many of the dwellers complained about the program. The officer pointed out that the government has no intention to increase participants by including new beneficiaries rather reducing the number of participants through graduation. This resulted in the increment of newly chronically food insecure individuals in the study area. Especially, FHHs are the most vulnerable groups of communities. The causes for female-headed households such as widowed and divorce augment through time to time in the study area. Most of them are asset poor. They need support from the community or government although the opportunity to be included in the PSNP is found to be rare. Thus, the situation triggers the life of FHHs to be worse.

7.2.1.3 Aggravate dependency and fear of graduation

There is no doubt for the effectiveness of the PSNP as a means to prevent asset depletion and building for chronically poor households. Majority of the participants believed that PSNP is nowadays the only social insurance for the people of the study area. PSNP is not only a means to prevent asset depletion but many farmers have also started to hoard assets. Farmers could access some money either in the form of public works or through direct support. One main option to find credit from government is through being members of PSNP. They used this money to pay taxes and debts, startup small scale businesses, build houses, and for other purposes like social obligations. The benefit of PSNP in the eyes of the participants and non-
participants is thus multifaceted. That is why farmers struggling not to discontinue being membership of PSNP although they had ample assets. Moreover, many participants tried to hide information regarding to the assets they possessed during the study period. They just presented themselves as poor and they had nothing in their household. This was due to fear of losing members of PSNP. Therefore, PSNP has promoted dependency although having many positive merits.

One key objective of PSNP is to make free chronically poor households from impoverishment. This is done through gradations. Graduation carried out in two ways. One is self-evaluation. If a farmer felt to have enough assets and did not show sign of involving in PSNP, she/he could graduate and would stop to be participants of PSNP once for all. However, due to high level of dependency in the study area and low level of productivity, one could not withdraw from participation of PSNP by his/her interest. It is rare to find such individuals. Second is through annual food security assessment of individuals performed by kebele officials and development agents in cooperation with officers found from the Woreda. This is practically very challenging due to shortages of officers, high number of PSNP participants, large number of food insecure kebeles, width of each kebele and very scattered nature of settlement patterns. However, graduation is a must every year so that kebele officials should carry out the graduation of participants whether they like it or not.

Fortunately, the researcher has attended the graduation of PSNP participants in Ginaza Silqisa Kebele during the field work in January 2012. The pattern of graduation of PSNP participants was as follows.

Orientation regarding to graduation provided to the participants during the meeting by development agents and kebele officials for half an hour in the outset. Numbers of participants were more than seventy-five. Both female and male participants attended the meeting. After a long discussion held among them, they reached some kind of consensus on how graduation should be performed. It was carried out by self-evaluation and mass-evaluation rather real assessments. Hence, chair person
gave first the opportunity for those individuals who wanted to graduate by their interest. No one was willing to raise hands and evaluate himself/herself. Everybody kept silent. The chair person told to raise hands repeatedly but still no hand. Finally, they obliged to transfer to the second option, “mass evaluation”. They also gave another chance to the participants to forward their witnesses who were better off among them. Again silence happened. They warned them to give witnesses once again but no response at all. After few minutes’ discussion held by the chair persons, they selected some individuals, who were believed to be better off by their own eyes among the attendants. After they have ordered the selected individuals to stand among the attendants, they told them that you were graduated and you should prepare yourselves to attend the graduation ceremony of PSNP participants which would be held at Woreda level annually. Finally, the meeting was over by FORCED GRADUATION.

The researcher has attempted to solicit views and attitudes of participants after a meeting about the situation. They told that this kind of graduation was not new to them. It happened last year and before last year. Since graduation is a must every year, everybody is expected to be graduated but they do not know exactly the year on which they would be graduated. It is performed by chance. One of the graduated participants said “I benefited by PSNP for three consecutive years but I have nothing in my household. My life is hand-to-mouth. Now I am forced to graduate. I would like to present my complaints to Woreda officials. I have to continue....” The kebele officials misunderstood the notion of graduation knowingly or unknowingly. This was due to the pressures coming from top officials.

The PSNP’s public works beneficiaries contribute to the construction and maintenance of a range of community assets including check dams, hillside terracing, roads, schools, clinics, small scale irrigation canals and ponds. These public works have improved access to services and created shared physical and natural assets (public goods) which have the potential to improve the lives and livelihoods of chronic poor households. However, a number of factors may limit the quality, impact and sustainability of public works. These factors include:
• Local capacity constraints have limited the effectiveness of field staff to plan and implement public works. These constraints include inadequate training of and technical support to local level administrators, high staff turnover rates and insufficient access to public works guidelines and manuals.

• The degree of consultation and participation in planning public works is high in many cases. In other locations, however, decisions on the prioritization and location of public works have been made by local administrators with little local consultation. In some cases this has created ownership and sustainability problems.

• Labor requirements for public works can prevent chronically poor households from investing their time in other activities. Although public works should be carried out during the agricultural slack period, public works has continued into the agricultural season.

7.2.2 Household Extension Packages

_Woreda_ officials and _kebele_ development agents are responsible for implementing a range of other activities aimed at reducing chronic food insecurity. These activities include soil and water conservation measures, agricultural and livestock extension, and ‘household packages’ of credit and agricultural inputs.

Household packages are intended to provide chronically food insecure households with the credit and agricultural inputs (e.g. improved seeds, livestock and fertilizer) needed to protect and build their asset and incomes so that they can ‘graduate’ from chronic food insecurity.

The government sees the provision of credit to PSNP beneficiaries and other poor households as crucial to build livelihoods and reducing food insecurity.
FSP credit has made a difference to the lives and livelihoods of many food insecure households. In many cases, these households have been able to use loans to purchase productive assets such as livestock and bee colonies with which they have been able to strengthen their livelihoods. However, credit is not yet reaching as many intended clients as anticipated.

Local extension officers are supposed to provide a menu of choices to households so that they can tailor the package to their needs and capacity. In practice, however, the options available to households tend to be quite narrow. Those households that adopted the new inputs saw an improvement in their yields.

7.2.3 Resettlement

The history of resettlement in Ethiopia is fraught. Under the Derg regime (1974-1991) around 600,000 people were resettled in ways that were poorly planned, divisive and often coercive. Partially as a result of these past failures, the EPRDF government had opposed resettlement throughout the 1990s. However, both the SDPRP and the FSP revived the policy of resettlement as a pathway for poverty reduction and food security. Under the current level of agricultural technology and overall development, areas referred to as drought prone areas cannot feed and support the people currently residing on them.

This Voluntary Resettlement Program (VPR) targets were those chronically food insecure (or chronically poor) households with the productive labor capacity to build a livelihood in their new homes. To prevent the problems experienced under the previous resettlement program, the New Coalition for Food Security outlined four pillars for the VRP. These are that resettlement must be 1) voluntary, 2) on under-utilized land, 3) in consultation with host communities, and 4) carried out with proper consultations.
Libo Kemkem *Woreda*, as mentioned before, is categorized as a food insecure *Woreda* among South Gondar Administrative Zone in Amhara Region. From the three components of food security program, resettlement is one of them and adopted in this area. Like other *Woredas*, communities from drought affected *Kebeles* of Libo Kemkem *Woreda* have been decided to be resettled at Quara *Woreda* and Tach Armachiho *Woreda*. However, majority of resettlers went to Quara *Woreda* based on the decision of top officials. At first, in 2002/3 on which resettlement started in Libo Kemkem *Woreda*, the dwellers were not voluntary to go to Quara and Tach Armachiho although a lot of instigation had been done by concerned bodies. Following this, two clear criteria were stated. First, the most affected households got priority and second, the government canceled credits for voluntary individuals. But, credits would be paid later. In effect, few voluntary people were being able to go to Quara and Tach Armachiho.

In the past two years; however, the numbers of volunteers have been increased except some limitations of quotas in this year. Many voluntary women and men went to Quara in search of better life. Their main cause to resettle at Quara and Tach Armachiho *Woreda* was crop failure due to soil exhaustion. FHHs are given priority. Interested individuals were motivated to marry before they went to Quara and Tach Armachiho. This was done to allocate the resources like land, oxen efficiently. Resettlers were given oxen and farmlands near their homes. Because of this many couples were formed. Marriage negotiation took place in front of selected committee members. Individuals got married without knowing each other’s background. However, they were forced to get their blood tested for HIV/AIDS before they decided to marry. The blood test was done at Libo Kemkem *Woreda* Health Station. As a result, almost all new couples were able to know their medical result.
As food security officer of the Woreda stated, the number of resettlers went to Quara and Tach Armachiho Woreda starting from 2002/3 were as follows.

Resettlement carried out at household level.

Table 7.1: Number of resettlers from Libo Kemkem Woreda to Quara and Tach Armachiho Woreda since 2002/3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of resettlers</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2002/3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2003/4</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2004/5</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2005/6</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2006/7</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2007/8</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2008/9</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1587</td>
<td>807</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Libo Kemkem Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office (Food Security Department)

Overall there have been significant constraints and implementation problems with the resettlement program.

- Although there had not been direct coercion, resettlement was not truly voluntary. Households were ‘encouraged to move’ through desperation, unrealistic inducements, and exclusion from food aid.

- Consultation was not substantive or participatory. ‘Consultation with local people took place to obtain their consent. However, this was generally restricted to convincing them to accept the resettlement and mobilize them to prepare for the resettlers arrival by building shelters’

- Preparations in resettlement areas were often inadequate: meetings with potential settlers often promised more than was delivered in terms of land and livestock, support, infrastructure, and services. ‘Differences between expectations and actual conditions were a major factor leading to many
resettlers leaving shortly after arrival and dissatisfaction among those who remained’

- The resettlement situation enhanced for the formation of FHHs in the form of disintegration of families through divorce, and separation. Resettlement at the beginning carried out not at household level rather male spouses in MHHs were allowed to go and arrange their homes at first; however, most husbands stayed in the resettled area for long time and some of them married other women without the consent of their legal wives. The event was so bad for females because they shoulder their family responsibilities.

- Others went to the resettlement places without cancelling their marriage agreements but they sold their household assets in need of money during emergencies.

7.2.4 Land Registration and Title Certification in Libo Kemkem Woreda

The Ethiopian Constitution states that all land belongs to the state and peoples of Ethiopia and shall not be subject to sale or to other means of exchange (Article 40.2 Proclamation No.1/1995). With regard to rural land, legislation regarding land administration and land use has been (re)enacted during the last ten years, both at the federal and at the regional level. The Federal Land Administration and Land Use Proclamation No. 456/2005 (which recently replaced 89/1997) provides among others that farmers have a perpetual right to use their agricultural holdings, and that this right will be strengthened by issuing certificates and keeping registers.

Established in 2000, the Environmental Protection Land Administration and Use Authority (EPLAUA) are coordinating land registration in Amhara. EPLAUA is accountable to the regional Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development. EPLAUA is composed of three divisions–division of environmental protection study, policy,
and control; division of land use study, information and GIS; and division of land administration and registration. There is a representative of EPLAUUA at the zonal level, although the role of zonal government offices has been reduced since the new decentralization policy of 2001. At the Woreda level, EPLAUUA has offices and is actively involved in the planning and execution of the land administration, registration and certification activities.

At the Woreda level, responsibility for land administration is vested in Woreda political administration (the council) and Office of Environmental Protection, Land Administration and Use. Establishment of committees at the lowest level of local government that is kebele and sub-kebeles were the main actors in data collection for the registration and issuance of the certificates. The members of these so-called Land Administration Committees get training to undertake this endeavor, but do not get payment for their time. The level of support the committee gets during the process come from Woreda officials.

Land registration at national as well as at regional level is meant to serve two purposes: improving tenure security and encouraging land and natural resources conservation and rehabilitation. The first objective is in line with overall policy of the Ethiopian government in recent years. Tenure insecurity has been the subject of much discussion, which seems to have convinced the government to develop measures to improve the situation.

Provision of land certificates, according to land administration experts, has equipped farmers of Libo Kemkem Woreda in general and the selected kebeles in particular the following benefits.

- Create sense of land rights among ownerships
- Help the land ownerships to get credits
• Resolve land and boundary conflicts
• Instigate for the widespread of rural infrastructures
• Promote environmental protection
• Protect communal lands
• Provide land related information

Based on the above procedures, the Land Administration and Use Department has executed for registration of land and provided certificates for farmers in 29 rural kebeles found in Libo Kemkem Woreda until now.

Table 7.2: Number of registered and certified land ownerships in Libo Kemkem Woreda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of household</th>
<th>Registered individuals</th>
<th>Certified individuals</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population size</td>
<td>Size of farmlands</td>
<td>Width of farmlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHHs &amp; FHHs</td>
<td>20,549</td>
<td>121,212</td>
<td>21500.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHHs</td>
<td>7752</td>
<td>35,290</td>
<td>5459.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FHHs</td>
<td>9853</td>
<td>37,574</td>
<td>7201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>38,154</strong></td>
<td><strong>194,076</strong></td>
<td><strong>34,160.92</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Land Administration and Use Department, Libo Kemkem Woreda

17 The land title certificate is issued in the name of the husband and wife, and contains a list of all plots measured, names of family members and their photos. However, the notion of husband and wife according to Land Administration and Use Department in Libo Kemkem Woreda is named as male-headed and female-headed households respectively, which really contradicts with the definition used in this study.
Table 7.3: Distribution of number of certified land ownerships in selected kebeles in Libo Kemkem Woreda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of household</th>
<th>Ginaza Silqisa Kebele</th>
<th>Yifag Akababi Kebele</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population size</td>
<td>Size of farmlands (hectares)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHHs &amp; FHHs</td>
<td>854</td>
<td>4308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHHs</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FHHs</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1337</td>
<td>5361</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Land Administration and Use Department, Libo Kemkem Woreda

Women farmers are now being given land ownership certificate that enables them to utilize the land as their own property like their men friends. The process of giving landownership certificate for women farmers is expected to minimize the social problems and reassure their equality with men.

According to the informants and land administration experts, the process of registration and giving land certificates faced certain challenges and limitations. These are:

- Registration and provision of land certificates were carried out based on the information found from 1996/7 land redistribution documents. However, these documents which named as registration protocol did not find in most kebeles of the Woreda so that this created big constraints in land registration and certification.
- Unavailability of defined boundary direction during registration and certification of land
- Lack of documents that shows exact farmland size of farmers
• Lack of registration of ownership of farmlands
• Individuals found to be registered other individuals’ farmlands
• Individuals found to be registered farmlands of yemotekeda meret improperly
• Communal lands are pushed and used by individuals
• Availability of permanent land certificates on communal lands in the name of individuals and built houses on communal lands
• Registration of same plot twice
• Women’s name did not register in common lands
• Land tax receipts served as sources of information for land certification. Some women farmers did not have land tax receipts even though they had the land. Most of them obtained household income through rented and sharecropped land for long years. In some cases, female-headed households are accustomed to taking a loan from a sharecropper giving their land as guarantee. But, this would involve a risk of debt. This, in turn, led to loss of land and exposed them to problems of attaining land certificate. In addition, divorcee’s mothers cannot get land certificate because their ex-husbands snatched them forcefully.

7.2.5 Natural Resource Conservation

Massive land degradation is undermining the productive capability of the agricultural sector in Libo Kemkem Woreda. Topographically, this Woreda is extremely exposed to land degradation. Moreover, the increase of population, long-ranged war, deforestation in the Woreda affects the status of soil fertility. Thus, vulnerability degree of the people of this Woreda increases from time to time.

One of the measures taken by the government in order to tackle this complicated problem is adoption of natural resource conservation with unpaid labor of
the communities. Communities are motivated to carry out natural resource conservation with the help of development agents and local officials every year. This measure is considered as a big agenda by the government. Not only PSNP beneficiaries involved in natural resource conservation works but also non-PSNP beneficiaries’ participation was a must, otherwise, the consequence would be alarming.

Natural resources such as soils, water, plants, and animals are key factors affecting farm productivity. As a result, communities took a part in construction of physical structures (terraces, soil bunds, drainage ditches etc.). These activities followed by planting trees, shrubs and grasses on a denuded landscape that result in greater resiliency of production systems. Vegetative cover not only helps to control erosion and conserve water, but also serves to recycle nutrients, reduce ‘evapo-transpiration’ on crops and soils, and increase soil organic matter.

Furthermore, biological components can serve the dual purpose of natural resource conservation and can also provide income generating products such as fodder, fuel-wood, fruit, and medicine. Systematic adaptive research needs to be conducted on dual purpose conservation-income generating techniques such as grass strips, upper watershed reforestation, homestead vegetation and alley cropping.

However, there were some shortcomings in running and keeping the sustainability of natural resource conservation activities. First, even though a series of discussions underwent regarding to convincing the people to participate in natural resource conservation, people considered as a burden on them and some of them wanted to request payments for their labor work. This negative attitude of the people impedes the effectiveness and successful accomplishments of the activity. Second, dialogue arose among the residents of the kebeles concerning to priorities of places
whereby natural resource conservation carried out. It was one of the sources of disagreements between the residents and professionals (Woreda officials). Hence, some of the residents abstained to involve in the work. Third, some of the residents complained the timing of work in natural resource conservation. It was not comfortable and unmatched with agriculture works particularly cultivation of crops as they stated. They resisted the revision of working time but hampered by local officials since it came from above and wanted for reports purpose. The timeline of natural resource conservation works was the same throughout the kebeles of the Woreda in particular and the country in general, which really did not consider the interests of the communities and contradict with the seasonal calendar and agro-ecological nature of works of each kebeles. Thus, limited involvement of people in the natural resource conservation is noticed. Fourth, during the meeting participants and kebele officials agreed to punish those individuals who did not come in the work; however, lack of consistency arose during punishments by kebele officials. This action never motivated other individuals to take a part in the activities. It was thus one of the reasons to be mentioned for the low level participation of communities’ natural resource conservations. Fifth, we can say that majority of participants believed that natural resource conservation works should be realized to guarantee the sustainability of future generation. They involved in the work based on this notion. They built physical structures as well as afforestation every year. However, these works did not exist and would be out of use after a year due to lack of protection. Hence, the natural resource conservation program frustrated most of the participants and became a reason for people not to participate in similar kinds of works.
7.3 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Interventions in Libo Kemkem Woreda

NGOs play very crucial role in securing the sustainability of human life through engaging in various activities both at national, regional as well as local levels. For instance, they provide support to the local government bodies and the communities in the form of financial, material, skill and knowledge transfer, technological, and human skill assistance in Libo Kemkem Woreda. Since Libo Kemkem Woreda is a place whereby complicated problems such as food insecurity, flooding, environmental and land degradation, human and animal epidemics, poor infrastructure facilities, undulated topography, it attracts the attention of the government and NGOs. However, some NGOs have been trying to react and mitigate the problems of the Woreda. Currently, World Vision\(^\text{18}\), Care Ethiopia, UNICEF, have been provided their support to the communities. World Vision, which established its office in Libo Kemkem Woreda in 2006, has been played very important role in the area. It has built big offices and engaging in different areas of the communities’ life. Here is mentioned below some of the activities carried out by this organization.

7.3.1 World Vision

World Vision identified that the community of Libo Kemkem Woreda has crucial problems of access to clean water, education and medical treatment and hence it gives a priority area of intervention. Furthermore, World Vision is aware of the

\(^{18}\) World Vision is a Christian organization and one of the world’s leading relief and development agencies, currently helping more than 100 million people in nearly 100 countries in their struggle against poverty, hunger and injustice, irrespective of their religious belief. World Vision receives the financial support of the UK Government, the European Union, charitable trusts and corporate supporters – in addition to thousands of people who sponsor children in communities overseas. It started its intervention in Libo Kemkem Woreda in 2006.
topographic nature of the Woreda, which is vulnerable to degradation so that it pays much attention in improving farming, practices of the farmers. This makes possible to conserve the land and improve productivity. It also works on awareness of HIV/AIDS pandemic disease since it affects the community.

World Vision believes that this program directly or indirectly realizes agriculture, food security, household income and community sustainability, if and only if it works in partnership with the people of Libo Kemkem. Thus, building these strong foundations and providing better access to clean water and healthcare will enable the communities to achieve a better quality of life and a more stable future. Some of the achievements of World Vision are provided hereunder:

**7.3.1.1 Agricultural training**

Most people in Libo Kemkem rely on farming to make a living. Learning about new techniques and technology which help them to be more productive has a huge impact on their livelihood. Farmers attended training in broad bed making (a method of plot preparation which helps to avoid the soil becoming waterlogged) along with other skills, and received tools to use in this process. This will enable them to increase the yields of their crops.

World Vision discouraged the use of chemical fertilizers, and encouraged the local people to learn about preparing organic compost as an alternative. People learned how to produce and use the compost theoretically and practically, so they could develop their skills and see the practicality of the system. The trained farmers could soon be seen sharing their knowledge and skills with their neighbors as they started production of compost in their own fields.
7.3.1.2 Water

Those farmers who trained in irrigation methods will soon have two new motorized pumps to help them with their work. The farmers are in credit schemes, and this will mean they no longer have to rent pumps or lease land, as they can farm elsewhere. It will also benefit others, as an additional five hectares will be irrigated and used to produce crops. The combination of the pumps and the knowledge gained in training helps them in their journey of self-sufficiency. These farmers are not only improving their own livelihoods, but inspiring others in the community to follow in their footsteps.

7.3.1.3 Healthcare

The Libo Kemkem region is very marshy, especially during the main rainy season (June to September), and when the land is flooded, as it was this year, travelling such distances is extremely difficult. Establishment of health centers is very important.

One of the aims of the work in Libo Kemkem is to improve the health of the people. People attended training in how to prevent and control epidemic diseases, particularly kala azar (which is spread by sand fly bites and causes fever and damage the liver and spleen) and malaria, which are both widespread in Ethiopia. People also attended training in primary health care, knowledge on harmful traditional cultural practices and family planning.

7.4 Summary

Libo Kemkem Woreda is a vulnerable place to food security problem. Most of the food insecure people live in rural areas. Rural areas are not provided with infrastructure facilities like electricity, clean water, schools, transport so that the rural
people are not accessible to these developed assets. Moreover, the difficult topography nature of the area, erratic rainfall, soil infertility, degraded environment, aggravates the problems of the rural people.

Besides the people’s effort, governmental and non-governmental organizations have attempted to alleviate the problems of the people. For instance, government is used to design various policies and programs to improve the rural people’s life. The preparation of the full poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) named as Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP) is to mention one example. To meet the objectives of SDPRP, the government runs Productive Safety Net Programs (public works, household extension, and resettlement); land registration and certification; and natural resource conservations. However, lack of awareness, negative attitudes, negligence, and misuse of programs were some of the constraints to carry out the programs successfully.

Moreover, non-governmental organizations like World Vision, Care Ethiopia, EARO, UNICEF, and others have been engaged in changing the life of the rural people. Some of them involved directly while others intervened indirectly. They provided technical, material, human skill, financial assistance. However, their efforts were not satisfactory as to the views of the rural people because they did not try to cover the remote vulnerable areas of the Woreda as their periods of intervention were short. They did not differentiate the food secure from the non-food secure areas and communities while providing assistants. FHHs issue treated as no single social entity rather as women, and low investments compared to the population of the Woreda. World Vision is relatively better than other organizations in terms of having long vision concerning to the area.
In general, neither the governmental nor the non-governmental organizations constituted specific programs about FHHs. They were treated as equal beneficiary as MHHs. The researcher did not find special programs that aim to improve the life of FHHs although they are the most vulnerable section of the society.